



Dealing With Stress

We all have stress at some time or another, but stress can make it hard to eat well and be active. Living with a chronic disease can also add stress to your life. Here are some ways to deal with stress:

Know what stresses you out...Are any of these things worrying you?

- Money issues
- Your health
- Problems in your marriage
- Your job
- Health care expenses
- A sick family member or friend
- (or not having a job)
- Your children or family

Know the signs of stress.

- Worrying
- Can't sleep
- Changes in appetite
- Forgetting things
- Feeling tense
- Drinking or smoking more
- Tiredness
- Nagging Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Feeling "down"
- Bad temper
- Unable to get things done
- Skin rashes
- Avoiding your friends

Know how you react to stress.

Which of the above signs are common for you when you are stressed?

Choose healthy ways to deal with stress.

- When you're stressed out, you may not feel like you have the time or energy to watch what you eat or be physically active. The good news is that there are lots of healthy ways to deal with stress.
- When you know what stresses you out and how you react to stress, you can deal with it better.
- Don't smoke, drink alcohol, or eat more than usual when you are stressed. You'll only feel worse.

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Ideas that can help you cope with stress.

- Help your body handle stress by **eating well**.
- Be **physically active** every day. When you are active, your body releases hormones called endorphins that make you happy and give you energy.
- Take a 10-minute **“time out.”** Go for a walk, do some stretches at your desk, or pamper yourself for a few minutes.
- Learn different ways to **relax**, such as deep breathing.
- **Get support** from friends. Talk about what’s bothering you. Friends can give you a different point of view.
- Give yourself **positive messages** every day. Tell yourself, “I’ve done it before and I can do it again.” This will boost your spirits and give you the encouragement you need to face the day.
- **Pray, meditate** or **worship**.
- Learn how to **problem-solve**.

Changing Stressful Situations and Avoiding Stress.

- **Plan ahead.** Making a plan of what needs to be done can help you handle or work around a lot of day-to-day stress.
- **Set goals** you can reach.
- **Take charge** of your time.
- **Be realistic** with your schedule.
- **Let others help!** Share some of your work with others.
- **Walk away** from people and things that make you tense.
- **Say “NO”** when you’ve reached your limit. Say “Yes” only when it is important to you.

Relaxation Exercise.

1. Take a full, deep breath.
2. Count to five.
3. Let go of your breath slowly.
4. Let the muscles in your face, arms, legs, and body go completely loose, or pamper yourself for a few minutes.